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United States.
Report of the committee to
whom was referred the
communication of Patrick
1814.

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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE

TO WHOM WAS REFERRED THE,

COMMUNICATION OF PATRICK MAGRUDER,

CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

RELATIVE TO THE

DESTRUCTION OF THE LIBRARY, &c.

DECEMBER 12, 1814.

Read, and referred to a committee of the whole house on
Monday next.

WASHINGTON:

A. & G. WAY, PRINTERS.

.....
1814.

REPORT.

THE Committee, to whom was referred the communication of Patrick Magruder, clerk of the house of representatives, relative to the destruction of the library of congress, and records and papers appertaining to the office of the house of representatives,

REPORT :

THAT they have satisfactory evidence that the library of congress, consisting of volumes, (agreeably to the catalogue herewith submitted) was destroyed by the enemy on the 24th August last; and, also, the manuscript records, papers and secret journals of congress, mentioned in the communication submitted to this committee.

In addition to the ascertainment of those facts, the committee have considered it their duty to form and express some opinion as to the degree of diligence and precaution exercised by the clerk, and those in his employ, to prevent the loss which has been sustained. In doing this they have taken into consideration the threatening aspect of the enemy in the Chesapeake, the Potomac and the Patuxent, almost uniformly from the month of June to the period of their incursion on the city of Washington, and the apprehension which prevailed on this subject, as developed by the committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the success of the enemy in his recent enterprises against this metropolis, &c. They have also referred to the several heads of departments, and obtained information as to the time and manner of

their removing and securing the papers and effects belonging to their offices; which information the committee herewith submit as part of their report, contained in the letters marked No. 1, 2, 3, 4; from which it appears that measures, preparatory to a removal of the documents belonging to the several departments, were taken as early as the 20th and 21st of August, and the removals all effected by the 22d; whereas, no preparatory measures were taken to secure the library and papers appertaining to the office of the house of representatives, or any efforts made to procure the means of transportation till the *afternoon* of the 22d of August; after which time, the committee are convinced the means of transportation were difficult to obtain, if not impracticable.

As to the absence of the clerk on account of *indisposition*, as alleged, the committee have not examined as to the particular nature and extent of that indisposition. They will only say that it was, or ought to have been, serious and alarming to have justified his absence under the circumstances which then existed. The committee are, therefore, constrained to express the opinion, that due precaution and diligence were not exercised to prevent the destruction and loss which has been sustained.

In relation to the remaining subject of inquiry submitted to the committee, viz: the amount of money paid on account of the contingent expenses of the house, since the first of January last, for which the clerk ought to be credited, (the original vouchers having been destroyed in the conflagration of the capitol) the committee have no reason to disbelieve the statement of the clerk and his deputies as to the destruction of the vouchers alluded to. They have, however, experienced much difficulty, delay and embarrassment, in their endeavours to ascertain and adjust the accounts of the clerk, so as to do justice between the public and the individual. This task was the more arduous and unpleasant, from the circumstance

of the clerk himself disavowing any knowledge of the pecuniary transactions of his office, and referring the committee to his chief clerk, colonel George Magruder, who, on application, appeared equally unable or unwilling to enter into such a *specification* of the accounts and expenditures as would enable the committee to form any probable result. He presented a general statement (herewith submitted, marked M,) by which it appeared that the clerk of the house of representatives stood charged on the books of the treasury with the sum of \$ 50,863 16, and that he claimed credit for \$ 48,000, for expenditures for contingent expenses of the house from January, 1814, to 23d of August of the same year; leaving a balance due the United States, on that day, of \$ 2,863 16.

The committee considering this alleged amount of expenditure as being very great and unprecedented, for the same length of time, and presuming as the clerk was able to state a particular sum expended and a precise amount remaining in his hands, on the day his vouchers were destroyed, he might, from the same data which produced the results stated, by the aid of his recollection, the assistance of the clerks in his office, and the officers of the house, and especially by reference to the bank or banks in which his public deposits were kept, and individuals to whom the principal payments were made, furnish such specific statements as would have enabled the committee to form a reasonable opinion as to the correctness of the general statement which had been presented; they deemed it their duty to require a statement of the principal *items* of ordinary expenditure, and the names of persons who had furnished them: this information was ultimately obtained by the admission of the chief clerk, the information of other officers of the house, and the knowledge which the committee themselves had of the most considerable objects of expenditure. All of which are stated in the account herewith presented, marked A. The clerk was then

requested to ascertain from such sources as were practicable, the sums paid on account of those several items of expenditure, some of which they knew he could ascertain with certainty, and most of which with probable accuracy. In compliance with this request, the committee were furnished with the statement marked B. The principal items of which are :

To paying Messrs. Ways and Weightman for printing and stationary, . . . \$ 25,600 10

To paying messengers of the house, . . . 2,584 50

The committee having obtained from the treasury department a copy of the last settlement made by the clerk on the 14th of January, 1814, on account of the contingent expenses of the house of representatives, and having examined the books of Messrs. Ways and Weightman, as also the cashiers of the bank of Washington and the Union bank of Georgetown, are satisfied that the sum of \$ 3,539 53 ought to be deducted from the \$ 25,600 10, charged for printing and stationary in the account rendered by the clerk and marked B as aforesaid, the same having, in the opinion of the committee, been already allowed and included in the settlement with the treasury on the 14th of January, 1814. Which settlement the committee herewith submit, marked T.

The charge in the account B, for the pay of messengers for the house, is manifestly incorrect, and exceeds their proper allowance by the sum of \$ 518 55.

The committee having allowed all other charges specified and claimed by the clerk, and having by every means in their power ascertained the *items* with which the contingent fund is chargeable, and made the most liberal allowance for its expenditure, submit the statement, marked A, as the result of their inquiry :

From which it appears, that on settlement with the treasury on the 14th of January, 1814, a balance remained in the hands of the clerk of the house of re-

representatives, due the United States, of 6,574 87

That from the 14th of January, 1814,
to the 18th of April, 1814, the clerk drew
from the treasury the sum of . . . 44,288 29

Making the sum of \$ 50,863 16

With which he now stands charged at
the treasury.

That his expenditures since the above
settlement, and such as the committee pre-
sume were not included in it, on account
of the contingent expenses of the house to
the 19th of September, 1814, amount to
the sum of 30,933 57½

Leaving a balance unaccounted for by
the clerk, and due the United States, of \$ 19,874 58½

The committee recommend the following resolu-
tion:

Resolved, That Patrick Magruder, clerk of the
house of representatives, be credited at the proper
office of the treasury department, with the sum of
\$ 30,933 57½ for expenditures on account of the con-
tingent expenses of the house of representatives,
from the date of his last settlement to the 19th Sep-
tember, 1814.

DOCUMENTS.

No. 1.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

November 5, 1814.

SIR,

Upon enquiry, I find that the books and papers appertaining to the treasury, were packed up on Sunday the 21st of August, 1814, and sent off in the afternoon of the following day.

It is also stated to me, that much difficulty was not experienced in procuring carriages to transport the books and papers; and that, in fact, two waggons more than were eventually found necessary, were engaged by the department.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. J. DALLAS.

Joseph Pearson, Esquire.

No. 2.

WAR DEPARTMENT,

November 21, 1814.

SIR,

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 2d instant, enquiring at what time the papers be-

longing to the department of state were removed, previous to the destruction of the public buildings in this city, and whether it was practicable for the clerk of the house of representatives to have obtained the means of removing the library and papers belonging to that house, in the capitol of the United States, within the space of three days previous to that event.

Having left this city on the Thursday preceding the 24th of August, for the neighborhood of Benedict, and having entered it afterwards, momentarily only, prior to the 24th, I have no knowledge, from personal observation, of the means which might have been obtained by the clerk of the house of representatives, for the removal of the library and documents of that branch of the legislature.

Apprehending, when I left the city, that the documents belonging to the department of state would be in danger, I gave orders that they should be packed up, and in readiness to be moved on notice of the approach of the enemy. It was under this order, and on the subsequent notice which was communicated, that they were removed to a place of safety on the 22d of August.

I have understood that the papers of the department of war were likewise removed on the 22d of August.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES MONROE.

*The Honorable Joseph Pearson,
house of representatives.*

No. 3.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,

November 5, 1814.

SIR,

In compliance with the request, contained in your note of yesterday, requiring "such information as to the time when the papers of this department were packed up and removed, and finally, my opinion as to the practicability of obtaining the means of conveyance, for three days immediately preceding the destruction of the capitol by the enemy;" I have the honor to represent, that having, on Saturday the 20th August last, directed the chief clerk of this department to prepare for the removal of the books, papers and effects of the navy department, and to procure the necessary transportation; I now enclose his statement of the facts and circumstances attending the execution of my order, as conveying more correct information in relation to the subject of your enquiry, than that which comes within my own knowledge.

I am, respectfully,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. JONES.

*The honorable Joseph Pearson,
chairman of committee of enquiry, &c.
house of representatives.*

In obedience to instructions from the secretary of the navy, to prepare for the removal and safety of the public documents and archives of the navy depart-

longing to the department of state were removed, previous to the destruction of the public buildings in this city, and whether it was practicable for the clerk of the house of representatives to have obtained the means of removing the library and papers belonging to that house, in the capitol of the United States, within the space of three days previous to that event.

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In obedience to instructions from the secretary of the navy, to prepare for the removal and safety of the public documents and archives of the navy depart-

ment on Saturday the 20th day of August, 1814, and anticipating a difficulty in procuring waggons, he sanctioned the transportation by water in boats up the Potomac river.

On Sunday three of the clerks were employed packing up, in boxes and trunks, all the books of record, papers, library, maps, charts, plans, stationery, trophies, various valuable instruments, paintings, prints, &c. ready for removal on the next day; and in the evening of Sunday the 21st of August, two river boats with their crews were engaged for the purpose at the ordinary pay and wages.

On Monday the 22d August, two of the city carts were engaged, and all the boxes and articles in the navy department (heavy desks and furniture excepted) were put on board a boat at the nearest wharf to the offices, and at 4 P. M. proceeded up the river as far as Georgetown. In the forenoon of Monday the 22d, two large waggons with drivers presented themselves at the department for employ, and on account of the previous arrangement to transport by water, they were transferred to the accountant of the navy department, who loaded them with the effects of his office.

On Tuesday the 23d August, the chief clerk with one of the clerks of the department, proceeded up the river Potomac, and passed through the locks and canal to a place of safety.

There was no difficulty in procuring more boats and men enough to navigate them up the river above the falls.

BENJAMIN HOMANS, Clerk.

Navy Department, November 5, 1814.

No. 4.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

GENERAL LAND OFFICE, November 5, 1844.

SIR,

In the absence of the commissioner, I have the honor to reply to the questions in your letter of yesterday.

On the Sunday preceding the destruction of the public buildings, the records of this office were prepared for removal.

On Monday, waggons were procured in the country, loaded in the evening, and the records removed the same night.

As to the practicability of obtaining the means of conveyance on other roads than that which I travelled, I cannot form an opinion, but on that road I found difficulty in procuring what I wanted for this office, on that day.

I am, very respectfully,

JOHN GARDINER, *chief clerk*.

Hon. J. Pearson.

ment on Saturday the 20th day of August, 1814, and anticipating a difficulty in procuring waggons, he sanctioned the transportation by water in boats up the Potomac river.

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BENJAMIN HOMANS, *Clerk.*

Navy Department, November 5, 1814.

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I am, very respectfully,

JOHN GARDINER, *chief clerk.*

Hon. J. Pearson.

M.

UNITED STATES, for expenditures on account contingent fund, house of representatives, for 1811.
To Patrick Magruder, Dr.

| | | |
|--------|--|----------------|
| 1811. | | |
| May 1. | To amount passed by the committee of accounts, say about* | 45,000 |
| | To amount newspaper accounts as authorized by resolution* | 4,000 |
| | | <hr/> 48,000 |
| | By warrants received from the treasury on account contingent fund. | 50,863 16 |
| | Balance due United States, | <hr/> 2,863 16 |

*Vouchers burnt in the capitol.

Note—The whole claims against the contingent fund of the house of representatives have been paid, except some few newspaper accounts which have never been exhibited, and which will not exceed two hundred dollars.

Note—The date 1st of May, ought to be to the 24th of August, 1811, when the vouchers were burned.

GEORGE MAGRUDER, for

PATRICK MAGRUDER.

A.

Dr. Patrick Magruder, clerk to the house of representatives, the contingent accounts, in account with the United States.

Cr.

| | Dolls. | Cts. | | Dolls. | Cts. | Dolls. | Cts. |
|---|--------|--------|--|--------|------|--------|--------|
| To balance found due from him on settlement at the treasury on the 14th of January, 1814, (see auditor's account) | 6,374 | 87 | By paying Messrs. Wags the amount of their account from the 14th of October, 1813, to the 18th of April, 1814. | | | 9,399 | 43 |
| Warrant, No. 6848, dated January 15, 1814, | 10,000 | | By paying Mr. Weightman his account in full for printing and stationery, from the 6th of December, 1813, to the 18th of April, 1814. | | | 12,670 | 22 |
| 6962, March 12, | 9,288 | 29 | By paying St. Clair for 150 cords of wood, per contract, at \$5 45 per cord, | 1,267 | 30 | | |
| 7003, 29, | 10,000 | | Do. for 30 at \$ 10 per cord, | 300 | | | |
| 7177, April 18, | 15,000 | | Do. for 23 at \$ 10 per cord, | 230 | | | |
| | | | furnished for the library | | | | |
| Debit of P. Magruder, at the Treasury, on the 14th of November, 1814, | 50,563 | 16 | By paying for newspapers furnished the members, say 186 members, at \$ 11 23 each (being the full allowance) | | | 1,787 | 50 |
| | | | By paying Mr. Monroe, for postage, as per account, | | | 2,082 | 50 |
| | | | Mr. Hill for cabinet work, | | | 89 | 78 1/2 |
| | | | Mr. Harbaugh for carpenter's work, | | | 120 | 12 |
| | | | Mr. Lindsey, per resolution of the house, | | | 73 | |
| | | | Mr. Dawson's funeral expenses, estimated | | | 100 | |
| | | | Mr. Frost, extra services in clerk's office, | | | 1,200 | |
| | | | Mr. Sprigg, do. do. allowed by the committee of accounts, though not justified by resolution of the house, | 20 | | | |
| | | | | 811 | 10 | | |
| | | | Js. Claxton, for services in post office, and the hire of a horse during the session, | | | 831 | 10 |
| | | | Js. Corcoran, his account for 83 yards carpeting, | | | 446 | |
| | | | | | | 166 | |
| | | | MESSENGERS AND WAITERS. | | | | |
| | | | E. Spaulding, for his services and 2 horses 142 days, at \$ 4 per day, | 368 | | | |
| | | | E. Spaulding, for services prior to the session, | 12 | | | |
| | | | Geo. N. Thomas, for his services during the session and 4 days thereafter, at \$ 2 per day, | 284 | | | |
| | | | Geo. N. Thomas, for extra services prior to the session, | 22 | | | |
| | | | Isaac Phillips, for his services, 142 days, at \$ 2, | 284 | | | |
| | | | Geo. Cooper, for do. 142 days, at \$ 2, | 284 | | | |
| | | | Geo. Cooper, extra services prior to the session, | 44 | | | |
| | | | Oswald Dunn, for his services, 142 days, at \$ 2, | 284 | | | |
| | | | Rd. Stewart, do. do. do. | 284 | | | |
| | | | | | | 2,066 | |
| To balance brought over September 19th, 1814. | 19,874 | 28 1/2 | By balance due the United States, the 19th of September, 1814, carried over. | | | 30,968 | 57 1/2 |
| | | | | | | 19,874 | 36 1/2 |
| | | | | | | 50,863 | 16 |

B.

A STATEMENT of the contingent fund account of the house of representatives, as exhibited by Patrick Magruder, clerk, November 3d, 1814.

Dr.

Contingent fund account of the house of representatives, in account with Patrick Magruder, clerk.

Cr.

| | Dolls. | Cts. | | Dolls. | Cts. |
|---|--------|--------|---|--------|------|
| To paying Messrs. Ways and Weightman, for printing and stationery. | 23,000 | 40 | By sundry sums of money drawn from the treasury since the 14th of January, 1814, including a balance due from P. Magruder to the United States, per settlement made that day, | 50,853 | 16 |
| Messengers of the house. | 2,364 | 30 | | | |
| James Claxton. | 416 | | | | |
| Thomas Monroe. | 39 | 78 1/2 | | | |
| George W. Lindsay's funeral charges (see resolution) | 400 | | | | |
| Sundry accounts, particulars not recollected, embracing from 60 to 80 different accounts, | 19,229 | 61 1/2 | | | |
| Balance remaining in my hands, subject to the orders of the committee of accounts, | 2,963 | 10 | | | |
| | 30,563 | 46 | | | |

C.

An explanatory statement shewing how the difference arises between the two accounts, marked A, B, annexed.

Dr.

PATRICK MAGRUDER.

Cr.

| | Dolls. | Cts. | Dolls. | Cts. | N ^o . of accounts. | | Dolls. | Cts. |
|---|--------|------|--------|--------|-------------------------------|---|--------|--------|
| To amount of Messrs. Ways' account for printing, from the 14th of July, 1813, to the 14th of October, 1814, which the committee are satisfied was included in settlement of January, 1814, and again charged in statement B. | | | 1,881 | 03 | 3. | By wood accounts, not included in statement B. | 1,787 | 30 |
| To amount of Mr. Weightman's account for printing, from the 3d of August to the 6th of December, in the year 1814, on which last day P. Magruder gave his note, endorsed by Messrs. Ways, payable at 30 days, can be no doubt of its having been included in settlement of January, 1814, and again charged in statement B. | | | | | Supposed 30. | Newspapers for members, not included in statement B. | 2,092 | 30 |
| To overcharge in F. Spalding's account, in statement B. | 352 | | | | 3. | Mr. Hill, for cabinet-work, not included in do. B. | 125 | 12 |
| Do. G. N. Thomas's account, in do. B. | 91 | 30 | | | 3. | Mr. Harlan's, for carpenter's work, not included do. B. | 74 | |
| Do. J. Phillips's account, in do. B. | 64 | | | | Supposed 10. | Mr. Dawson's funeral expenses, do. do. B. | 1,200 | |
| Do. G. Cooper's account, in do. B. | 64 | | | | 1. | Mr. Frost, for extra services, do. do. B. | 20 | |
| Do. R. Stewart's account, in do. B. | 64 | | | | 1. | Mr. Spring, for extra services, do. do. B. | 811 | 10 |
| To "sundry accounts, not recollected, embracing from 60 to 80 separate accounts." | | | 518 | 50 | 1. | Jas. Crockett, for carpenter's work, do. do. B. | 166 | |
| To balance remaining in the hands of P. Magruder, subject to the orders of the committee of accounts, as per account B. | | | 2,963 | 10 | 78. | To balance due the United States, as per statement A, | 19,874 | 38 1/2 |
| | | | 20,150 | 80 1/2 | | | | |

T.

Dr.

Patrick Magruder, clerk to the house of representatives, his contingent account, in account with the United States,

Cr.

| | Dolls. | Cts. | | Dolls. | Cts. |
|--|--------|------|--|--------|------|
| To balance due by him, per report, No. 26,428, | 2,410 | 94 | By amount of his expenditures, from the 1st of December, 1812, to the 7th of January, 1814, for stationery, printing, newspapers, fuel, candles, and office furniture, &c. including the expenses incident to the internment of Mr. Smilie, member from Pennsylvania, and erecting monuments for him and general Carey, also for the hire of horses and laborers, and payments made sundry individuals, pursuant to resolutions of March and July, 1813, | | |
| To treasury warrants, for amount of the following, issued in his favor, viz: | | | per account, | 40,336 | 07 |
| No. 5,566, dated February 1st, 1813, | 10,000 | | By balance due the United States, | 6,274 | 87 |
| No. 5,559, dated March 5th, do. | 13,000 | | | | |
| No. 5,560, do. 6th, do. | 3,500 | | | | |
| No. 5,597, dated June 22d, do. | 10,000 | | | | |
| No. 6,251, dated August 3d, do. | 6,000 | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | 46,910 | 94 | | 46,910 | 94 |
| Balance brought down, | 6,274 | 87 | The balance acknowledged by the clerk, per his account, is | 6,675 | 92 |
| Advanced him since the above settlement, | | | The balance found due by him, per foregoing statement, is | 6,274 | 87 |
| Warrant No. 6,636, dated January 15th, 1814, | 10,000 | | | | |
| 6,968, March 13th, | 9,288 | 29 | Amount of difference, | 101 | 05 |
| 7,005, do. 29th, | 10,000 | | | | |
| 7,477, April 18th, | 15,000 | | | | |
| Debit of Patrick Magruder on the books of the treasury, | 50,663 | 16 | Which difference arises as follows, viz: | | |
| | | | This sum short added on the 6th page, | \$ 100 | 05 |
| | | | This sum short charged on voucher No. 32, | 4 | |
| | | | This sum over credited for balance of his former account, | 4 | |
| | | | | 108 | 05 |
| | | | From which deduct the following sums, viz: | | |
| | | | This sum overcharged on voucher No. 14, | 2 | |
| | | | This sum overcharged on voucher No. 125, | 5 | |
| | | | | 7 | |
| | | | As above, | 101 | 05 |

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

REGISTER'S OFFICE, November 14th, 1814.

JOSEPH NOURSE.

Register.

A true copy from the records.

AUDITOR'S OFFICE,

January 14th, 1814.

P. FERRALL.

COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE,

January 19th, 1814.

ANDREW ROSS.

